



## Forensic aspects of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Disaster

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### Abstract:

The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Disaster started on a record hot day in February 2009 and resulted in over 300 separate fires with a death toll of 173 and over 400 presentations to hospital emergency departments. This occurred a little over a week after a heat wave in which over 400 people were thought to have died prematurely in southeastern Australia. The Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine in collaboration with the police force and the State Coroner's Office and over 100 colleagues from all over Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand and Japan implemented a DVI process based on Interpol guidelines to identify the deceased persons. CT scanning was conducted on all remains collected and played a pivotal role in the identification processes in conjunction with experts in pathology, anthropology, forensic odontology and molecular biology. This paper outlines the scale of the disaster and the work, from a forensic medical perspective, to identify the deceased.

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### Resource Description

#### Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event, Temperature

**Extreme Weather Event:** Wildfires

**Temperature:** Extreme Heat

#### Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

#### Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

**Non-United States:** Australasia

#### Health Impact:

## Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Morbidity/Mortality

**Resource Type:** 

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

**Timescale:** 

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified